MAY CARISTIE

She gave her heart to him the day they met. Yet a cloud of mystery hung over his life. Was it a hidden past? Was it a dual personality? Thrills and excitement, suspense and surprise blend in each fascinating instalment. Miss May Christie has woven with rare skill this charming story of entangled hearts. :: :: ::

> (Copyright, 1928, by May Christie.) WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY.

JIM DALTON, a handsome young artist who falls in love with SHIRLEY MARSH, a pretty and attractive girl. Shirley is also

DAVID BURKE, a country gentleman, nearing forty. LUCILLE, a rather world weary actress, about whose marriage there

CHAPTER L.

N a sleepy summer's afternoon, when the shafts of golden sunlight filigreed through nodding beech trees to make dancing patterns on a Surrey backwater, Miss Shirley Marsh-young, very much alive, bewilderingly pretty and attractive-leant forward in her small cance and with paddle poised reflectively in mid-air thus addressed her vis-a-vis:--

"Love? How I dialike the word! And everything else that's senti mental! I'd never be so crazy as to fall in love!"

Her lips curied scornfully, and her rounded little chin was tilted up caffantly-but in her pretty eyes as they rested on the eligible admirer who was gazing at her so intently, lurked the provocative gleam of the

"Some day you'll meet your Waterloo, Miss Shirley-meantime, touch wood!" And David Burke, prosaic, country gentleman, who had loved

this will-o'-the-wisp young woman through many a fantalizing day, smiled till the fine little creases round has eyes belied the queer pain in his

is a mystery.

How young she was! How pretty! And how out of reach!

"To be really appreciated one should never fall in love!" Miss Shir- want!" he was repeating-dully, dogradiant that even the glancing sunlight on the Surrey backwater seemed dimmed by contrast.

for love," said simple David Burke, his eyes on Shirley and his whole soul shiving through them, "I think-"

She gave a little trilling laughwhen she laughed, the music of it seemed to her prosaic tover a bewitching medley of birds' song and running water and soft woodland sounds.

"You ought to have lived a hundred years ago, you dear, remantic goose! 'Just made for love,' indeed! Tust made to be trodden on' roll mean! No, thank you-not for me!"

She screwed her piquant little faco into a Minerva-like solemnity as she continued:-

"Could you picture me in the domeetic role of doormat?"

"But-Shirtey-you don't under-

"Indeed I do! Too well!" A pert gleam shore in Miss Shirley's eye. She flicked the water smartly with her paddle, "Believe me, I'm not 'made for love." T've other though in view." Leaning forward from his precar-

fous position in the stern of the cance, David Burke touched a gossamer fold of the dainty summer frock the young girl wore-and there was reverence, as well as adulation. in the touch.

"This pretty frock-and you-" h stammered, "delicate, duinty, distracting-in spite of all you say, you aren't made of 'sterner stuff,' I'm glad

"Mr. Burke, are you crazy?" There was an key note in Shirley's fresh young voice. Beneath clevated brows. her maze went forth, rebuildingly.

But to David Burke-har "nearly middle-aged admirer," on mentally she styled him-speech suddenly had come, a pent-up flood that no longer

would be dummed. "Crary? Perhaps I am! Crazy Zor love of you-crazy with wanting you! Shirley, my dear, don't draw away." He caught her two hands ead the cance paddie in his own

strong clasp a grip that would not mered, "I shall always be your be denied. "Shirley". friend-you know it. But isn't there "Don't! You burt me-and-you -couldn't there be some hope befrighten me"- Miss Shirley, despite her previous valiant protestations, reverted instantly to the timid, helpless type she so affected to despise.

But David Burke went on. the world to make you happy. Some- wood blended together in a gentle YOU!" HE CAUGHT HER TWO HANDS AND THE CANOE BADDLE How beautiful a thing was life! All imes I twish that I were poor, so that harmony,

that she might not see the pain in aside, David's eyes. She hated so to hurt | She screamed. The big car swerved so much to live it!" "Ambition? A career? Society? All lead sea fruit!" said David pleadingly. 'Don't fling love away for empty

approciate it-but I'm not quite great car on its side, like some deready to receive it yet." Sifriey's feated giant, grouning. in perplexity. "Later on, perhaps-

David Burke in his normal, kindly driver, lying there so quietly. tones, pulling himself together. "And "Oh, is-is he killed?" gasped Shir-

"It's a glorious world," said Shirley, , ize softly, with apparent irrelevance. She curred, in the shape of a big touring slon-" stared across the little creek into the car driven at a reckless pace around

haven't lived my day yet-and I want second with two wheels on the bank. we'll carry this poor boy there-" Crash! It overturned, hurling Its

colitary driver with terrific force for thirty feet along the road. Shirley screamed again, her slender figure emerging from a cloud of dust. "I don't want to fling it away-I do Only a foot away from her panted the

white brown were knitted together In a twinkling David Burke sprang forward and switched off the engine. "I won't say any more, my dear- Then he ran swiftly down the road but remember, I shan't change," said towards the prostrate figure of the two-and-twenty! And-yes, decid-

"Then hurry burry!" Pink spots of had won! melting greenness of the summer the bend-s pace so swift that she excitement burned in Shirley's cheeks. woods, her pretty head averted so had no time to save herself, to spring "Grandmamma will give you brandy to bring back with you-and she'll 'phone the nearest doctor to come at him! "It's a glorious world-but I to avoid her, running crarily for a once to the White Cottage of course

And David Burke went running down the road, turned sharply to the right and disappeared through the short cut in the woods, leaving the young girl and her patient to a silence

and a solitude complete. Suppose that he should die? Shirley bent over the calm, pale face, with its bandaged forehead, ly-

ing there so helpless on her lap. How young he was-not more than edly-how good-looking! A little trickle of blood, escaping noft ferns,

now, suppose we return to the White ley, white to the lips, and with such from the bandage, was on his hair-Cottage for the tea and strawberries a trembling at the knees that her and Shirley wiped it off with her own ground-this is an ideal spot for a

N a certain golden afternoon a fortnight later a young man and a girl were strolling through she Surrey woods. The man was tall and rather slender, with a wiry, well-knit frame, a lean and poyish face lit by a pair of fine dark yes, and the possessor of a sensitive, nobile mouth that indicates the true

The sun went glinting through the on the girl's wavy, red-gold locks,

beside a woodland pool fringed by

"Miss Shirley, here's your back-

moery of the beech trees down on heir uncovered heads on the man's lark, curly, close cropped hair, and They stopped in a green little glade,

"La-in the pose correct?" inquired the embarrassed sitter, hoping he there!

didn't see the blush. "Quite perfect-just hold on as you resolution should change, slipped on

And an enchanted silence fell be tween them-a happy, comprehending ort of silence that spoke more vivid-

than words. For Shirley and her erstwhile paient were approaching that dear, deeve"-had, indeed, been steadily

weeks. With all the charming egotism of the young when youth and real ronance are beckoping. Miss Shirley and quite forgotten David Burke, her

be more correct, had relegated him o a dusty corner of her mind. How tame and dull that prosaic cooing seemed beside the arder of

She gased down into the fern fringed pool, and saw the image of her own fresh face. How wonderful t was to be young and pretty andpeloved!

to see your eyes!" The artist's words beating rapidly. were intended to be businessitive, but to Shirley they sounded like a caress.
"They're the bhiest things I've ever seen, Miss Shirley-bluer than the con, Miss Shiring-bluer than the

er soft, throaty little laugh.

Jim Dalton' halted momentarity in us work, brush poised in mid air, m ips smiling happily.

"Upon the contrary! When I woke up by the roadside on that everblessed afternoon two weeks ago, with my head in your lap and your

Dying? With all the inducements laughed his boyish laugh. "No-not a hance of it!"

From out the undergrowth appeared a tiny, furry head, watching those curious humans with bright, yet timid eyes

the kind of smile you gave me then, again, he'd want to live! It-it was wonder-

Mass Shirley, not unconscious of he pleasing pleture that she made, work!" said he.

amiled up at him her blue eyes very. The little rabbit scampered off into still closer up against his shoulder, blue, her pink obesits with a wild the undergrowth with flying feet. How hig he was now strong how thum, and her red- How unoriginal they were, these hugold locks and soft blue gown a vivid mans! In the little green world

"Yes-but you can talk to me if you F U.I.d. moon was up that night. lke!"

And Shirley could not sleep. From under her pillow she

Why, it was only 11 o'clock!

-stooping swiftly-she kissed the head ache!" Jim Daiton's smile held beckoning her to come out into the

"ARE-ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?" SHE WHISPERED NERV-

HE MOVED A LITTLE, GROANING AS HE MOVED AND

down by the little wicket gate? It was Jim's eight-and he was She got up hurriedly, before bee

are!" The young man hastily drew some clothes and a small white cloub, and noiselessly descended. A world of scented blossom-silence

Could any setting be more ex-

quinite? There could be no doubt that he

loved her! His eyes, the tones of him. ightful crists known as "failing in voice, his every action told her so! In the shadow of a big etm tree,

> didn't want to be too bold. How silent the countryside was lying, bathed in this clear white splen-

der, she hesitated for a moment. Sha-

"Shirley!" Jim was beside her, Shirley-my dear-is that you?" She laughed a little tremulously.

"It's an enchanted evening, isn't t? I couldn't alcop"-He caught her by the arm.

"Come down this path-over to those shadows and smell the roscoand see the bly white moonth Like two children on some truants!

adventure, they stole off into a little world of perfumed shade, hearts

hyacinths!"

The enchanted silence of the woods was broken, and the young girl gave drawing it nearer to himself. "Shire-

ley, I never thought the world could hold such beauty and such happiness—till I met vou!" The moonlight flickered for a mo-ment on her face, giving it a weird, unearthly sort of heauty, as she whis-

"You look just like a fairy princess only a thousand times more beau-"You're laughing at me!" Again

eyes looking down into mine, I thought a paece of the sky had tumbled down by mistake!"

"And I thought you were dying!"

"If you're laughing at me!" Again then the middle in Shirley's roice. "Hush! listen to the nighting is my limb you know just what it's my ling?"

Jim's tones were breathess,

supplemented Shirley, a very tendor, like a runner nearing the goal.

"Wonderful things!"

"The things I want to say to you,

"Dying? With all the inducemental sweetheart, and that I haven't got the She turned and looked at him, her prettineas shining pearl-like in the monlight.

want to hear them-Jim!" He caught her close in his two arms.

then, tilting up her little face, "Shirley!" Yes, Jim 7

-but it's true!"
"My dear!" she whispered back

ain, hiding her face against his oulder, "Oh, Jim-"
"Shirley, I-I simply worship you! He suddenly for sook his easel, and that day I nearly lost it—and met a kind of paradise since then! Tell

"It's much too glorious a day for Shirley....." and the glorious a day for Shirley....."

ther wonderful! That no smell about his coat, too-"Shirley-dearest-you aren't She laughed the throaty little laugh he loved to hear.

You foolish boy-I-I've loved you from the moment that I mot you He gave one long sigh of sheer elief then, and held her tighter in his arms. His eyes were just a trifle

"I-I swear that I'll be good to you, my dear! I-d can hardly believe in my own tremendous luck! A girl ke you-that any man would "As though you could make my through her open window, as though wonderful!"

The moon shown down beautifully upon them—and it almost seemed as hough an amused twinkle lurked omewhere on her kind old fac-

Only—the happy lovers didn't no-ce it—as is their way! Shirley, I'll go up to town to-prow and got the engagement of! We'll do everything property. WOTTO it should be done! 'Yes, Jim!" The young girl's eyes.

ere abining. He stooped and kissed her on the ips that long, first kiss with which is other can compare.

The following afternoon Jim set off to town upon his precious mis-sion. Miss Shirley roved the country roads in dreamy solitude. The mimoulous had occurred as ast—she was in love!

On her return she was conscious of a stranger sitting on a rustic ooking young woman, with an air of mahion, very smartly dressed.

As she approached the stranger rose and rustled elegantly across tha

grass. "The maid said you were out, and so I waited here for you." The smart young woman took in every detail of Shirley's fresh appearance, quesking the while in a low, beauti-fully modulated voice.
"She must be an actress—and ehe's

very handsome," Shirley thought, But along she merely said:— "Is there anything I can do for

"I understand," said the older woman, eyeing Shirley keenly, "that house."
"Yes, but he's gone up to fown today." A memory of Jim's mission
brought a quick confident smile to
Shirley's lips. Then she added

The you know him?" A queer look proceed the stranger's

ted 38 Instalment.)



I could work my fingers to the bone for you!"

Her gaze was on his face, studying the crinkly little lines around the eyes which time and geniality had together wrought. "I'd give you everything you

learned by heart.

"You don't quite understand me," tapped the shiny cance with a tenta- her floppy river hat slung by a ribtive hand. 'T'm a frisky venture- bon to her arm, and her piquant little some little boat that's longing for face one glow of animation, prosure more exciting waters a giddy little David Burke decided, as he had done craft that's tired of Surrey creeks a hundred times before

explore new streams"----"And maybe shoot the rapids?" cut girl could ever come within a hunin David rather grimly. But Shirley nodded gayly as she

enid: "Why, yes, that would be exciting! wouldn't necessarily be swamped, on either side. you know-and if I did run on the ceks, it would only be a temporary matter till some one pulled me off

agmin!" "The little craft might be damaged in the process?" suggested

Duvid soberly. "Fortunes of war," smiled Shirley 'and, anyhow, the little craft would have had its fling!"

LIFE'S VICTORY. DAVID'S face was suddenly il-

"And after your small boat had weathered all the storms and whiripools that you seem to think spell life, what then, my dear?" Miss Shirley giggled-charmingly,

"Why, then, if there was a rice

afe port, quite handy, the little raft mightn't be feeling quite so erky and so skittish and would be able to sail right in:" "You darling!" David bounded forward with a velocity that almost speet the fruil cance, and caught

coording to her wont.

Miss Shirley in his arms. "Is that promise, dearest?" "It isn't anything of the sort," said Shirley, the coquettish, "and-look-

ou're crushing all my gown." Overhead, in a world of feathery creenery, a thrush was singing her little heart out in a flood of golden melody. But the beauty of it seemed to David Burke like exguisite pain. 'My dear-my dear," he stam-

hand the friendship? I-love you The cance was swinging smoothly through the stream, the paddle plied "My dour my dear-I know I'm by Shiriey's capable, small hands. The not nearly good enough for such a thrush's song and the soft swish of IN SHIRLEY'S VOICE. girl as you. But I'd do everything in the water as it gurgled on the polished

your dear old grandmother promised limbs refused to carry her. Every- fresh handkerchief. She noticed that | picture!" Jim Dalton set his easel to supply us with " I'm ready." With swift, sure strokes Miss

She leaned a little forward, facing house, There she moored her little answer.

craft. As she walked beside him in the and stagmant places, that wants to beauty, freshness, charm of manner and complete bewitchingness no other

dred miles of Shirley Marshi "Listen! A motor horn!" They had reached a little winding

lane, flanked by high mossy banks done at once!" "No car would ever attempt to come this way-the road's too nar- no longer trembled.

rcw." Hurke observed, "I heard no ound." Down the centre of the little lane

IN HIS OWN STRONG GRASP,

walked Shiriey.

Then-before she had time

his air was dark and short and very down. He pointed to a mossy carpet thing seemed whirling in confusion. But David Burke was kneeling in curly-it must have been immensely underneath a siender, spraying birch by smiled a little smile so bright and gedly as though it were some lesson. Shirley paddled the cance along the the roadway, passing a careful hand curly as a little boy, she thought— tree and close to the water's edge. suream until they reached the boat- over that slient figure and made no and suddenly she felt tremendously "Just curl up over there had in your

berself together.

Then she drew sharply back. be's badfy burt! Poor box-poor boy!" proval. Poor boy!

a course in first aid-it ought to be

She knelt down in the roadway,

'Mr. Burke, won't you run for help at once, white I stay with him? "You aren't afraid to be left alone? There's a chance that he might be

delirious-alarm you in some way-no

"MR. BURKE, ARE YOU CRAZY?" THERE WAS AN ICY NOTE

protective, as though the patient were Ashamed of her momentary faint, indeed a little boy and she his mother! little bot, My! You look becautiful! ness. Shirley forced herself to join. He had a square, strong face-de- Do you know, you're a regular wood-"I think some people are just made she said slowly, "it's like this" she said slowly she mined chin and well-cut lips. "Ho-he isn't dead?" she stammered. She regarded his long, clean length "Look! His head's bleeding! Oh, broad, square shoulders with ap-

of limb, his well-knit figure and his She stooped down suddenly and should-get better! She and her pped a soft flounce from her under- grandmamma between them - they the woods, would nurse him back to health. He-"Quick-let me bind it up-I've had wasn't going to die-he mustn't die! She crooked her arm into a hollow, up-tilled at a charming angle. at work?" she queried, her small face. so this his head might rest more

comfortably. like!" working with quick, doft fingers that With her free left hand she felt his pulse. Then her own heart leaped in aches?" An anxious look crept into drew forth her wrist watch, glancsudden apprehension. For under her the bine depths of Mass Shirley's ing at its luminous figures. fingers she could feel no movement! eyes. Her patient's welfare was of

Was he dying-dead? Hot tears aprang to her eyes and curly dark hair up above the band- a repreachful tenderness that made clear, perfumed air. ages as though she would transmit

life to him from her own warm lips. "Hello!" said a feeble, shaky voice. The dark lashes lifted and a pair of strange brown eyes gazed into Shirey's wet blue orbs. "Hello!"

As though hypnotized between mazement and relief-and perhaps with a touch of something new and odd and quite unfathomable stirring in that hitherto invulnerable organ known as Shirley's heart—the young girl met the brown-eyed gaze. Then, remembering the kiss that

she had given him a hot flush mounted to her forehead. "Are—are you feeling better?" she whispered nervously.

He moved a little, groaning as he moved. And then the dark-fringed eyelids fell again and he apparently relapsed once more into unconscious-When David Burke and old Joe and

fully, but Shirley didn't care. For-since that one long glance into those strange brown eyes something new and wonderful and very disconcerting had crept into Miss Shirley's scheme of things, driving away all physical discomforts and opening up

world of vivid possibilities. That night a young moon glinted in a dark blue sky, and Shirley, wandering in the gardens of the White Cottage, stared drenmily up at its soft. "I AM CRAZY WITH LOVE OF YOU-CRAZY WITH WANTING Fadiance.

the shutter came at last she was still seated in the same cramped position with the young man's head supported on her arm. The arm ached dread-

the more exquisits becomes it was so RELAPSED ONCE MORE INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS.

"I ought to know him—he's my hus-bend! sld said grimly (Delicall as To-Morrow's Fascinat-

GRIPPING - THRILLING what happened-calamity ec. | doubt about it that he's got concus-| transitory. Life and death had come | Muss Shirley blush adorably. "You | And-what was that small red gloss very close to her that day-but life foolish little girll"

GOLDEN MOMENTS. forth his canvases and paints.

working up to it for the last two and close to an old, herbaceous bor-'nearly-middle-aged admirer," or, to

the handsome, cager boy!

"Please look directly at me-I want

"That isn't true-O flatterer!"

"I should think if any man were dying," went on the young artist fa- long, deep breath. "That isn't original "I should think if any man were tuously, "and you looked at him with

ful, Miss Shirley!'

the spring!

THE ENCOUNTER.

"It won't bring on your head-



"Must I ait very stiff while you're

great importance to her.